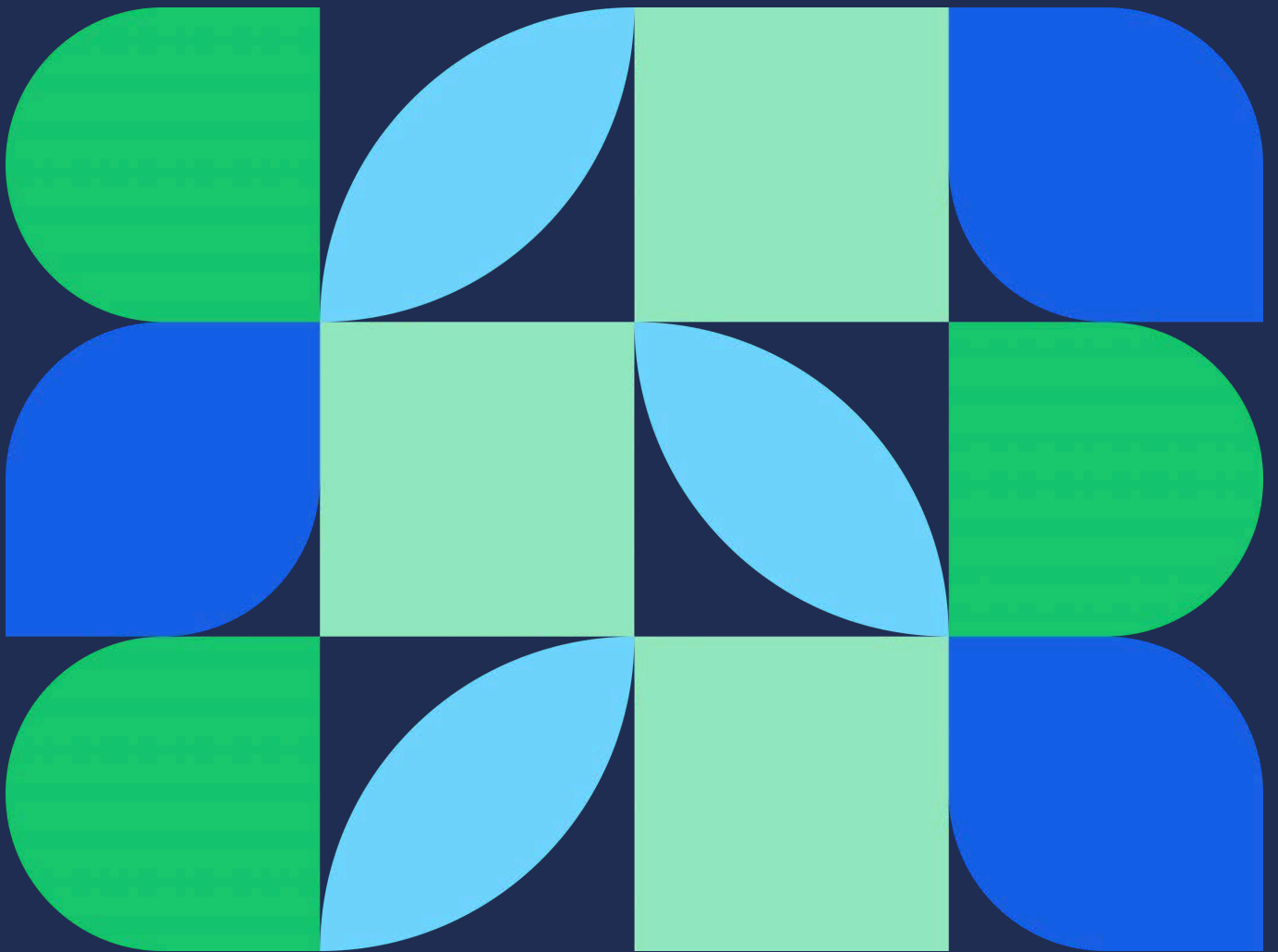


LEAD Network Conference 2025 Key Takeaways Report



Conference Highlights

 Milan, Italy

2 days

720+
Attendees

From all over Europe – Italy led the way with 182 participants – plus delegates from the US, China, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and the UAE

40
Sessions

From 121
companies and
38 countries

Theme: *We're All In*

As Allyson Zimmermann, CEO of LEAD Network, states, "Despite the challenging political climate, our mission remains unwavering: to create fair, equitable workplaces for all in the European Retail and Consumer Goods industry. At LEAD Network, **we're all in** and remain committed to breaking down barriers and championing gender equity at every level."

4 Outputs:

- The Future of Leadership
- Accountability from All: Doing Not Trying
- Talent Development Opportunities
- Inclusivity on Product Development

Read →

The Future of Leadership

"The future isn't what it used to be – with new challenges come unprecedented opportunities."

01 The Culture Shift

The Curiosity Gap

83% of executives say they encourage curiosity in their organisations. Only **52%** of employees agree.

Source: HBS Creativity Study 2018



85%

of Gen Z job seekers seek pay transparency



84%

of managers say candidates must possess soft skills



70%

of employees surveyed would leave their jobs with poor management

Sources: Adobe Future Workforce Study 2023, Human Capital Innovations 2024, LinkedIn Market Research 2025

02 The Organisational Shift



37 days

Outdated Structures

The # of additional days to implement change with a siloed and rigid functional structure

Fastest Growing Demographic:
Menopausal Women

40+

Symptoms

< 1/4

Women seek treatment

€130B

Global cost of Menopause

Source: Menopause Society 2024, FP Analytics & Bayer 2025

Beiersdorf

- Used **crisis as a catalyst for change**
- Leveraged Sales & Operations Planning processes for agile decision-making during COVID-19
- Adjusted production for high-demand categories like soaps in record time



Pernod Ricard

- Job titles can be too limiting – what you 'can do' goes far beyond what you 'should do'
- Shift from a functional organisational structure to **a project-based structure**

Actions

01

Go beyond measuring employee engagement - segment your employee base, gather insights about different types of employees, and take action.

02

Is your organisational structure working for you? Can you measure work output in terms of quality, turnaround time, and resources?

03

Ask yourself when making a major business decision: **"Who else is missing in the room?"**

"You would not ignore 20% of your consumers; why would you ignore this chunk of your workforce?"

Accountability from All: Doing Not Trying

Employee engagement, innovation, gender equity, hiring conversion, retention, and other vital KPIs – invest in culture to win in the future.

Peroni: BeHer Initiative & Standardised KPIs



- Paternity leave used
- Initiatives to attract STEM women
- Training budget
- % of women in leadership
- # of harassment complaints
- % of delayed success plan

Reckitt: Cross-Brand Integration of DEI KPIs



- **Issue:** Only 17% of executive roles held by women and a lack of psychological safety across organisation
- **Action:** Triggered broader inclusion initiative focused on dismantling systemic barriers
- **Solution:** Launched internal engagement platform that allows senior leaders to hear directly from employees

Eroski: Milestones Hit



- 76%** Women in workforce
- 74%** Women in management
- 82%** Women in governance

In 2017, Eroski achieved a gender parity-based Executive Board.

Launched a 2023-2027 equality plan, including:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Equal treatment | Work-life balance |
| Prevent discrimination | Gender perspective integrated |

MC Sonae: "Zero Accidents" Culture



Workplace incident rates significantly decreased, seeing impact from 2014-2024 due to:

- Leadership training
- Preventive programmes
- Visible management commitment
- Cultivating a positive safety culture

↓ **78%** Frequency

↓ **93%** Severity

Actions

01

Having one woman in leadership increases the likelihood of hiring another by **50%**. How can we support this?

02

Psychologically safe spaces are **2.2x** more likely to exceed financial targets, **2.8x** more likely to adapt to change, and **3.2x** more likely to retain employees. How we can we emphasise this?

03

Track inclusion metrics from **promotion rates, retention, and succession pool representation** to transform them into a strategy and roadmap – just like any other critical business project.

"It's no longer what you know – but the type of questions you need to ask to excel."

Sources: HBS Study 2017, Josh Bersin Company HR Analyst 2021

Talent Development Opportunities

Tailoring your internal initiatives from a talent AI marketplace to specific employee focus groups.

Kenvue: Impact Network



Volunteer-led groups and open to everyone

22,000 Members **22** Focus Groups

7 Commercial Activations

Pernod Ricard: Redefining Hiring



Pernod Ricard

A Horizon for ALL' ambition: Employee-centric approach to enhance career & development opportunities experience

Career Hub: A talent marketplace powered by AI, matching employees' skills and interests with career development opportunities

Danone: Listening to the Frontline



- Switch in uniform from white to blue to take into consideration role of menstruation
- Modification in bus routes with driver's dropping off women right to doorstep for night shift workers

Unilever: Making History in India



- Uphold reputation as #1 Employer of Choice for all diverse talent groups
- **Actions:**
 - Ensured gender-balanced factories, including in one for the most underdeveloped areas of Central India
 - Tackled invisible barriers (e.g., lack of women's toilets, daycare) through NGO partnerships and childcare facilities

McCormick: Poland's 2x Award Recipient



- Run events in cancer prevention from Pink Ribbon to Movember
- Signed the Diversity Charter in collaborate with Responsible Business Forum
- Launched a "Talents 50+" group to address needs of this demographic

Win: McCormick Poland has been distinguished as one of the most advanced companies in Poland for **Diversity and Inclusion Management (2024, 2025)**



Partner Members: LEAD Network **2026 programmes** have redesigned with a new course curriculum. Register by **1/12/25** via your Partner Ambassador.

Actions

01

Position inclusion as organisation-wide rather than a siloed or additional initiative. Normalising inclusive practices creates acceptance and sustainable cultural change.

02

Women make up for **only 26% of AI positions in the workforce**. How can we foster more AI learning opportunities?

03

Leverage employee groups to co-create business strategies (i.e., new products) and give them autonomy to lead initiatives.

Source: UNLEASH AI 2024

"There isn't a need to name psychological safety – tie it to existing company values and let it speak for itself."

Inclusivity on Product Development

Inclusivity extends beyond the people – how can this impact the overall consumer with product design?



Advocating for Water Conservation and Gender Equity Finish Water Waste Campaign



- Through the "Finish Water Waste" campaign, Reckitt highlighted the use of a dishwasher reducing water consumption compared to handwashing
- Brought attention to the global issue of water collection, a task that disproportionately falls on women and girls—who collectively spend an ~200M hours every day fetching water



Promoting Sanitation Access in Southeast Asia Harpic Loocater

- Harpic launched an app in Southeast Asia to help individuals locate safe and accessible toilets
- Driven by data revealing that many women in the region often avoid toilet use altogether due to safety concerns and scarcity of facilities (**with only 1 toilet available per 25K people**)
- Showed how inclusive health-driven innovation can directly improve women's well-being



70%

of surveyed consumers are more likely to buy from inclusive brands

Source: LSE Diversity Research 2024



1 in 5

people are neurodiverse

Source: CIPD Neuroinclusion at Work 2024

DIAGEO

Diageo's Neurodiverse ERG Lead shared many workplaces still design systems and communication for the remaining 80%, leading to **lost innovation and engagement opportunities**

Supply Chain POV

"In order to be fast, we first need to be slow."

Sustainable speed starts with strategic reflection. How do we not rush into action without validating direction or purpose?



Actions

01

Offer internal work placement trials for specific disabilities – example: a participating partner reached a **87% conversion** from work placement trial to employment (+47ppt from target).

02

Verify usability for company offerings and products (e.g., packaging accessible to individuals with impairments).

03

Create intentional "thinking spaces" before execution – including cross-team perspective labs or structured ideation blocks.

Encourage teams to ask "what's the impact?" multiple times before deciding "how?"

Conference Moderators

Paolo Lanzarotti, Former CEO, Asahi Europe & International
Béatrice Dupuy, President, P&G France and Benelux
Petra Brand, Global Sustainability Consulting Partner, EY

Breakout Session Leads

Jérôme Garbi, Global Cheese Chief Officer & CEO for EMEA, Bel Group
Mariama Conteh, Senior Inclusion & Diversity Mars UKI, Mars Inc
Joachim Kähler, Sales Excellence Director CG EMEA, Essity Hygiene & Health AB
Charlotte Exell, Group Online Director, Morrisons
Viviana Manera, Marketing Director, Birra Peroni part of Asahi Eur & Int'l
Arianna Schiavoni, DE&I, Talent & Development, Sr. Mgr, Birra Peroni
Julieta Hermosilla, Ecommerce Manager, Red Bull Spain
Patricia Souza, CEO and Founder, Geek Girls
Madeleine Forsch, Ingredient Development Manager – Texture Solutions
Innovation EMEA Ingredient
Nóirín Ni Laocha, Concept Owner, Insights & Innovation Function,
Musgrave Ireland
Catherine Mulhall, Programme Manager, Reckitt
Rose Cox, Head of Category Management UK, SC Johnson
John Bradbury, Finance Director, Transformation & New Business, Global
Finance Services, Reckitt
Nadia Zagui, Global Demand Planning Excellence Director, Barry
Callebaut AG
Dr. Lotta Kanto Öqvist, Chief Sustainability Officer, Diversey
Emma Barrett, Global Marketing Director Innovation, Diversey
Dr. Stefan Phang, Global Director Sustainability & Creating Shared Value,
Diversey
Lilian Wassen, Regional Marketing Director, DEI & Talent Projects, Diversey
Francis Hoefman, SVP HR - Global Talent, Leadership, Categories and
R&D, Reckitt
Flavio Stanzione, Global Brand Director Category Growth, Reckitt
Serra Bicak, SVP Self Care Business, Reckitt
Begoña Jiménez, CVP Global Laundry, Henkel Consumer Brands
Eva Cullen, VP SC Differentiating Markets, Europe, CHEP
Lilia Colombo, VP, Human Resources, Europe CHEP
Anna Sparty, Global Director Supply Chain Management, Schülke & Mayr
Grainne Lynch, Senior Managing Consultant Supply Chain
Transformation, IBM
Gitte Dalvad Laursen, Senior Director DEI, Coca-Cola Europe
Martina Bösch, Senior Technologist, Ingredient Germany GmbH
Gianluca Di Gioia, HR Director – Birra Peroni

Plenary Speakers

Paolo Grue, President & CEO, Procter & Gamble in Italy
Tanya Kopps, CHRO Europe & Indonesia Ahold Delhaize
Hilde Borst, General Manager Italy Kenvue
Anuradha Razdan, CHRO Beauty & Wellbeing Global Equity, Diversity &
Inclusion Officer, Unilever plc
Riccardo Bagaini, Professional Para-Athlete, Italy
Sasha Rubel, Head of Public Policy for AI, EMEA Amazon Web Svs
Amri B. Johnson, Founder and CEO, Inclusion Wins
Beatriz Santos, Commercial Director-CCO's, Eroski
Francesco Del Porto, President Italy & Global CCO, Barilla Group
Ayşe Yesim Ucelli, General Manager Pet Nutrition SE, Mars

Petra Smith, Engi & Innovation Director Europe, Magnum
Greta Ottolinni, Supply Chain Director South Europe, Mars Wrigley
Ewa Urbaniak, Plant Director, McCormick Polska
Perrine Trottein, Senior Regional Brand Manager, SC Johnson, Europe
Lisa Murdoch, Founder of Unleash MyFuture, Speaker, and Career &
Executive Coach Igniting Brilliance & Liberating Careers
Dunke Afe-Morgan, Senior Board Director/Advisor, Executive Coach-Mentor,
Facilitator and Founder of The Quotient Company
Nevena Djakovic, Organizational Development and DE&I Manager for Europe
and Indonesia, Ahold Delhaize
Jodeine Wheatcroft, Independent People & Culture Consultant, and DE
Associate for LEAD Network
Mathilde Aponte Faucherie, Head of I&D and Well-being, Danone
Ann-Sophie Cottyn, Director Store Performance & Store Care, Delhaize BE
Himanshu Gautam, Program & Impact Lead Global Operations Excellence,
Danone
Georgia Durham, Global Culture & Entertainment Manager, Nurture Brands
Co-Chair PRISM, Diageo's Neurodiversity ERG Diageo
Nicola Morris, Managing Director, Banking & Finance, ISS Facilities Ltd UK&I
Mark Forret, Chief Commercial Officer ISS A/S
Clare Allum, Global Head of Consumer & Manufacturing, PA Consulting
John Dickinson, AD - Global Talent, Belonging and Inclusion, Kimberly-Clark
Corporation
Eda Ekenkol, IT Project Manager Lidl France
Catalina Mateus, VP, Human Resources Western Europe, NIQ
Mara Panajia, HCB Cluster WE South and President of Henkel Italy
Anouschka Berger, Head of Sales, Amazon Ads Germany
Rona Medalla, Global HR Lead for Marketing & Customer Development,
Unilever
Filipa Alves Rocha, Area Leader Occupational Health, Ergonomics & Safety,
MC Sonae
Mara Galbiati, Team Lead I-Solution, GfK – an NIQ Company I Italia
Chiara Curcio, CFO Italy and Switzerland, GXO
Serena Colombo, Director HR South Europe, SC Johnson
Marina Guida, Head of Sales, Amazon Ads
Caroline Vaquette, Inclusive Culture Director Pernod Ricard
Helene Chaplain Lambert, Global Chief Information Officer Pernod Ricard

Premier Sponsors



Key Sponsors



Supporting Sponsors





Save the Date Ireland, 6–7 Oct 2026

LEAD Network Conference 2026

Join the Business Network as a Partner

- ✓ Join 65+ leading companies in CPG & Retail.
- ✓ Regular CEO and CIO roundtables.
- ✓ Thought leadership, mentorship, learning programmes, networking across 27K+ members for employees.

Get in touch [here](#)

Connect as a Member (free)

- ✓ 27K+ industry professionals across Europe and beyond.
- ✓ 90+ free annual events.
- ✓ 5 acclaimed learning programmes (for Partner Members or paid access).

Sign up [here](#)

Make Your Impact as a Volunteer

- ✓ 470+ volunteers from leading strategy to driving the mission forward.

Register [here](#)



Foundation LEAD Network
Keizersgracht 241
1016 EA Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email:

allyson.zimmermann@theleadnetwork.net

Visit:

theleadnetwork.net

Follow us:



LEAD Network Europe

© 2025 LEAD Network. All Rights Reserved.

This report is subject to copyright protection and may not be distributed,
copied and/or modified without our prior written consent.